

began giving Independence Day off, they merged into the national holiday, she said. The Friendship Social Club,

every human being can
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Toys 'R' Us closes store

By CLAIRE WILLIAMS
Staff writer

After four years of operation in Lufkin, the local Toys 'R' Us closed its doors for the last time Wednesday evening after a decision was made by corporate officers that the city was not big enough to support it.

"They said the growth is just not here," Kim Magee, the local store's manager, said. "The Lufkin population is just not accommodating the store."

Magee is not without hope that the retail toy store chain will return to the area — perhaps in the form of a combo store, which would offer Toys 'R' Us, Babies 'R' Us and Kids 'R' Us all under one roof.

"We're disappointed to have to leave Lufkin," she said. "It's been a great little town."

Even though the store is no longer open to the public, Magee said someone will be answering the telephone to handle customer service concerns until June 30. After that, customers will be directed to a toll-free number to call with their concerns, available for
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Staff photo by Joel Andrews

TOYS 'R' US Store Director Kim Magee locks up the store for the last time Wednesday.

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"Broadway Open House" in 1950. Steve

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30 days.

"Our biggest concern is for our guests," Magee said. "The last thing we want is to not take care of our customers."

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Of the 30 associates employed by the store, only three — including Magee — decided to take up the store's offer to transfer them to another store, but she said they will still have the opportunity to work at any Toys 'R' Us store in the future.

"The sad thing is, I can't take any of the employees with me," she said. "Some of them have been at the store for four years, ever since we opened. You don't want to lose employees like that in retail."

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In addition, she said, each employee was offered a severance package, and that both Target and Office Depot — which is expected to take over the store's space July 1 — offered jobs to the Toys 'R' Us associates.

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Magee also wanted to thank the city for all of the support and business it has given to the store over the years.

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"There have been some outstanding people who have shopped with us," she said.

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Other area Toys 'R' Us stores are located in Tyler, Beaumont, Humble and The Woodlands.

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